

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8405
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USMISSION NATO
USEC BRUSSELS
DIA

CONFIDENTIAL MADRID 9611

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: CARRILLO DETENTION

REF: MADRID 9598 (NOTAL)

1. AS REPORTED REFTEL, PCE SECGEN SANTIAGO CARRILLO WAS ARRESTED YESTERDAY AFTERNOON IN MADRID, AS HE LEFT A MEETING OF THE PCE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. SEVEN OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS, INCLUDING SANCHEZ MONTERO, AZCARATE, AND ALVAREZ, ALSO WERE DETAINED. CARRILLO REMAINS IN CUSTODY, BUT THE DISPOSITION
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OF THE OTHER SEVEN IS UNCLEAR.

2. BETWEEN 2,000 AND 3,000 DEMONSTRATORS REPORTEDLY GATHERED BEFORE THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SECURITY (DGS) LAST NIGHT TO PROTEST CARRILLO'S ARREST. THE MANIFESTATION WAS LARGELY ORDERLY AND BROKE UP WHEN THE POLICE PUNCTUATED

THEIR ORDER TO DISPERSE WITH A FEW SMOKE BOMBS. WE EXPECT SUCH DEMONSTRATIONS TO CONTINUE SO LONG AS CARRILLO REMAINS IN CUSTODY, THEREBY RAISING THE POSSIBILITY OF A CYCLE OF CROWD-POLICE OVERREACTION. THOUGH THE CHRISTMAS VACATION LIMITS THIS.

3. THE GOVT HAS NOT YET SPECIFIED THE CHARGES AGAINST CARRILLO, ALTHOUGH THERE IS SPECULATION THAT THEY MAY SIMPLY CONSIST OF THE CRIME OF ILLEGAL ENTRY, SINCE HE POSSESSES NO VALID SPANISH POSSPORT (THERE ARE RUMORS THAT CARRILLO ENTERED THE COUNTRY WITH A CUBAN PASSPORT AND UNDER A FALSE NAME). CARRILLO'S LAWYERS, ECHOED BY SOME ANTI-COMMUNIST OPPOSITIONISTS LIKE LIBERAL LEADER JOAQUIN SATRUSTEGUI, ALREADY HAVE STATED THAT THE GOVT WILL BE HARD-PRESSED TO MAKE ANY CHARGES STAND UP IN COURT. IN ADDITION TO NOTING THAT THE 30-YEAR STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS HAS RUN OUT ON ANY CRIMES CARRILLO MAY HAVE COMMITTED DURING THE CIVIL WAR, THEY CLAIM:
--ANY CRIMES HE MAY HAVE COMMITTED SINCE THE CIVIL WAR ARE COVERED BY THE KING'S AMNESTY DECREE; AND
--THE CHARGE OF ILLEGAL ENTRY WILL NOT STAND UP BECAUSE CARRILLO, AS A SPANISH CITIZEN, CANNOT LEGALLY BE BARRED BY THE GOVT FROM ENTERING THE COUNTRY.

4. REACTION TO CARRILLO'S ARREST HAS BEEN PREDICTABLE, WITH ALL POLITICAL LEADERS INTERVIEWED, FROM SATRUSTEGUI AND CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC LEADER GIL ROBLES THROUGH THE SOCIALISTS, CONDEMNING THE GOVT'S ACTION. OF THE MADRID MORNING PRESS, ONLY "EL PAIS" HAS COME OUT EDITORIALLY ON THE ARREST, STATING THAT "CARRILLO IN JAIL OR EXPelled WOULD BE AN UNNECESSARY SCANDAL, A POLITICAL STUPIDITY, AND A THREAT TO THE DOMESTIC

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AND INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CREDIBILITY OF THE GOVT."

5. COMMENT: CARRILLO'S CLANDESTINE DEC 10 PRESS CONFERENCE IN MADRID WAS A CHALLENGE WHICH THE GOVT COULD NOT IGNORE, ALTHOUGH HE MAY HAVE WANTED TO BE ARRESTED AT LEAST AS MUCH AS THE GOVT WANTED TO CATCH HIM. HIS DETENTION RETURNED THE PCE TO THE FRONT PAGES AFTER ITS STOCK HAD FALLEN NOTICEABLY AND IT HAD BECOME MORE ISOLATED. THE DISPOSITION OF THE CARRILLO CASE IS AN EXTREMELY COMPLEX POLITICAL QUESTION, ALTHOUGH WE NOTE THAT THE SPANISH JUDICIARY, EXCEPT FOR THE PUBLIC ORDER TRIBUNAL, HAS FOR SOME YEARS NOW DEMONSTRATED CONSIDERABLE INDEPENDENCE. AT ALL EVENTS, WE EXPECT THE GOVT CAN GET A CONVICTION ON SOME CHARGE IF IT CHOOSES. IF THE GOVT HANDLES THE CASE WISELY, AND DOES NOT MAKE CARRILLO A MARTYR, THIS EPISODE COULD BE A FIRST STEP IN LAYING THE COMMUNISTS "PROBLEM" TO REST. HOWEVER, IF THE CASE IS MISHANDLED AND THE DISPOSITION OF CARRILLO FORCES POLITICAL GROUPS TO CHOOSE UP SIDES, IT WOULD PUT AT HAZARD GOVT-OPPOSITION NEGOTIATIONS ON THE ELECTIONS.

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